

Special Services Library

Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Phone: (304) 558-4061 or 1 (800) 642-8674
Email: talkbks@wvlc.lib.wv.us



Special Services Library: Serving the Needs of People with Disabilities

The Special Services Library provides materials to people who cannot read standard printed materials due to a visual or physical handicap. To meet the varied reading needs of West Virginians, the Library offers a rich collection of:

- Large print books
- NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD). Contact Special Services for requirements. This collection contains both Braille e-books and audiobooks.
- Downloadable Books
- NLS Books recorded on digital cartridge
- Magazines in Special Format, including *Goldenseal* and *Wonderful West Virginia*
- NFB Newsline - Newspaper service accessed through one's telephone
- Descriptive videos
- Web-Braille
- Braille Books
- Braille Magazines
- Music instruction on digital cartridge
- Braille Music magazines and scores
- Music scores in large print
- Foreign language materials



Eligibility Guidelines

People receiving services must meet eligibility guidelines. They must be:

- Residents of the United States, including territories, insular possessions, the District of Columbia, and American citizens living abroad.
- Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
- Other physically handicapped individuals:

- Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of regular printed material.
- Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use regular printed material because of physical limitations.
- Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent reading regular printed material in a conventional manner.

Certifying Authority

The certifying authority must also meet guidelines:

- In cases of blindness, visual impairment, or physical limitations, “competent authority” includes doctors of medicine; doctors of osteopathy; ophthalmologists; optometrists; registered nurses; therapists; and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and Public or private welfare agencies (e.g., social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents). In the absence of any of these, certification may be made by professional librarians or by any person whose competence under specific circumstances is acceptable to the Library of Congress.
- In the case of a reading disability from organic dysfunction, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine and doctors of osteopathy who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

Veterans Preference and Institutions

Lending materials are available to veterans and institutions:

- **Veterans:** According to Public Law 89-522, blind and other physically handicapped persons who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States must receive preference in the lending of books, recordings, playback equipment, musical scores, instructional texts, and other specialized materials.
- **Institutions:** Institutions such as schools, residential care facilities, hospitals, and other establishments regularly attended by blind and/or physically handicapped individuals may borrow special format reading materials and playback equipment solely for the use of persons certified as eligible, who must be the direct and only recipients of the materials and equipment provided by NLS.